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SOVIET-OCCUPIED EAST PRUSSIA TO BE INCORPORATED INTO LITHUANIAN SSR

Hannoversche Presse
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Lithuanian exile organizations in West Germany are in possession of information that Soviet-occupied East Prussia is to be incorporated into the Lithuanian SSR.

The Soviet Lithuanian press has been giving a great deal of attention lately to the situation of the 440,000 natives of East Prussia who remained after the occupation. The total civilian population of East Prussia is estimated at about 900,000, of which 500,000 are new settlers from the interior of the USSR. The native population is mostly of Prussian-Lithuanian origin, with Lithuanian family names, and has always been recognized as the original population of the country which had been forcibly Germanized. After the Soviets had checked the origin of these people, they were given Soviet citizenship and were even allowed to take part in the election of the three deputies to the Supreme Soviet USSR. (This is another indication that the population of East Prussia is 900,000, since there is one deputy for every 300,000 people.) The three deputies elected, however, are Russians.

Since 1952, courses in Lithuanian and even in German have been permitted in various schools of East Prussia, especially in the rural districts where the old native population predominates. A certain measure of native cultural life is also tolerated by the Soviets. During the past 2 years, the Soviets have taken measures for increased settlement of the rural areas where two thirds of agriculture has been completely inactive since the occupation.

These and a number of other measures indicate that the Soviets are preparing to incorporate East Prussia into the Lithuanian SSR. It is particularly striking that the portion of East Prussia occupied by the Soviets is being more and more strictly sealed from the Polish-occupied portion. At present, the Soviets are reorganizing the civilian administrative authorities, and are admitting Germans in addition to Russians and Lithuanians as candidates for posts.

The Polish exile press reports that East Prussia is still an armed camp. According to these reports, the bases of motorized units, such as Gerdauen [Zheleznodorozhnyy populated point], Tapiau [Gvardeysk], Friedland [Pravdinsk], and Preussisch-Eylau [Bagrationovsk] are particularly well developed.

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